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Coloring
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UNICORNS

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Christy Shaffer



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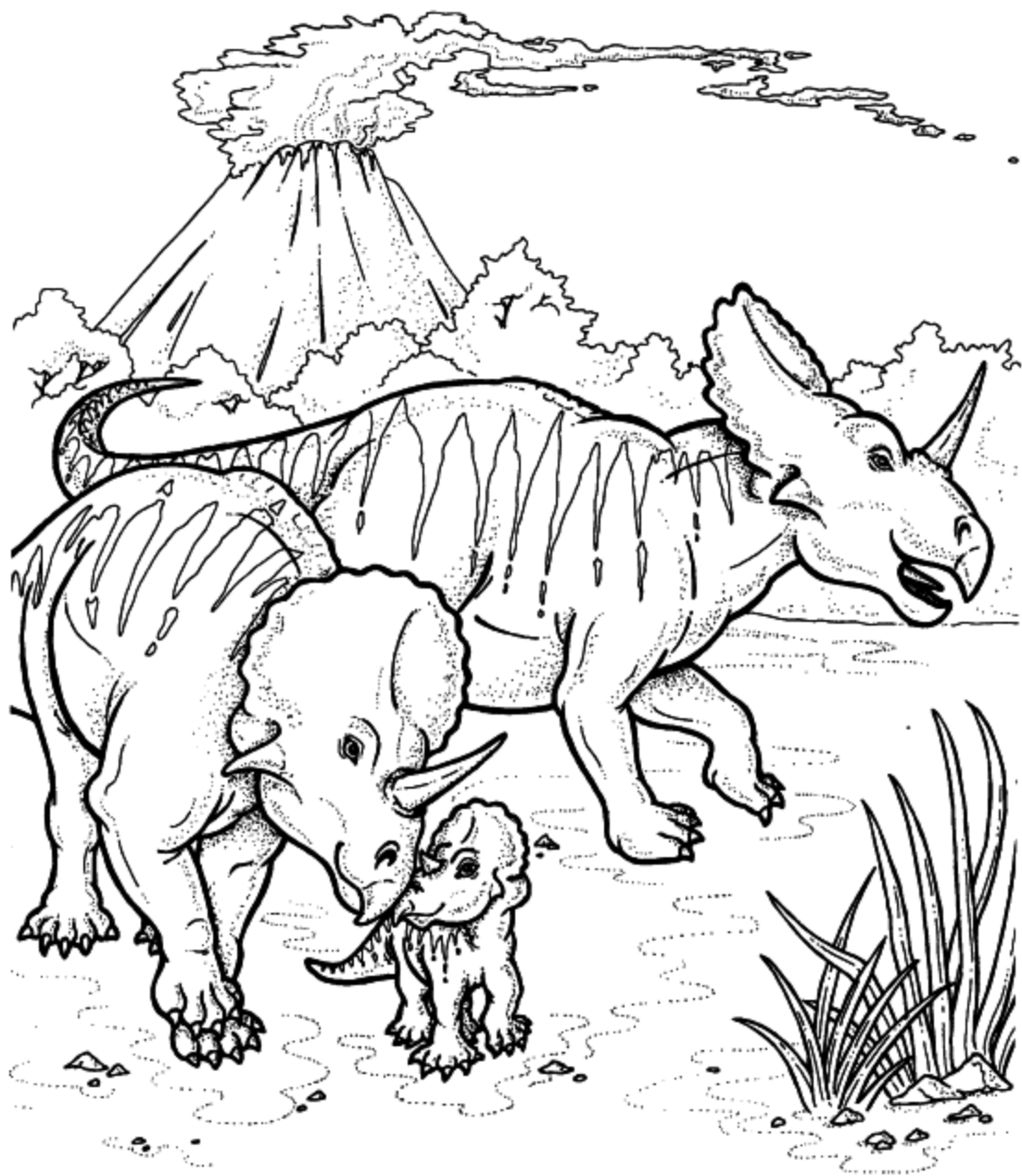
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Throughout the more than 2,000 years of its history, the unicorn has remained one of the most elusive of creatures. Although colorful and intriguing tales of unicorns abound in all corners of the world, the one constant found in all depictions, pictorial or written, is the single horn protruding from the forehead of this magnificent beast.



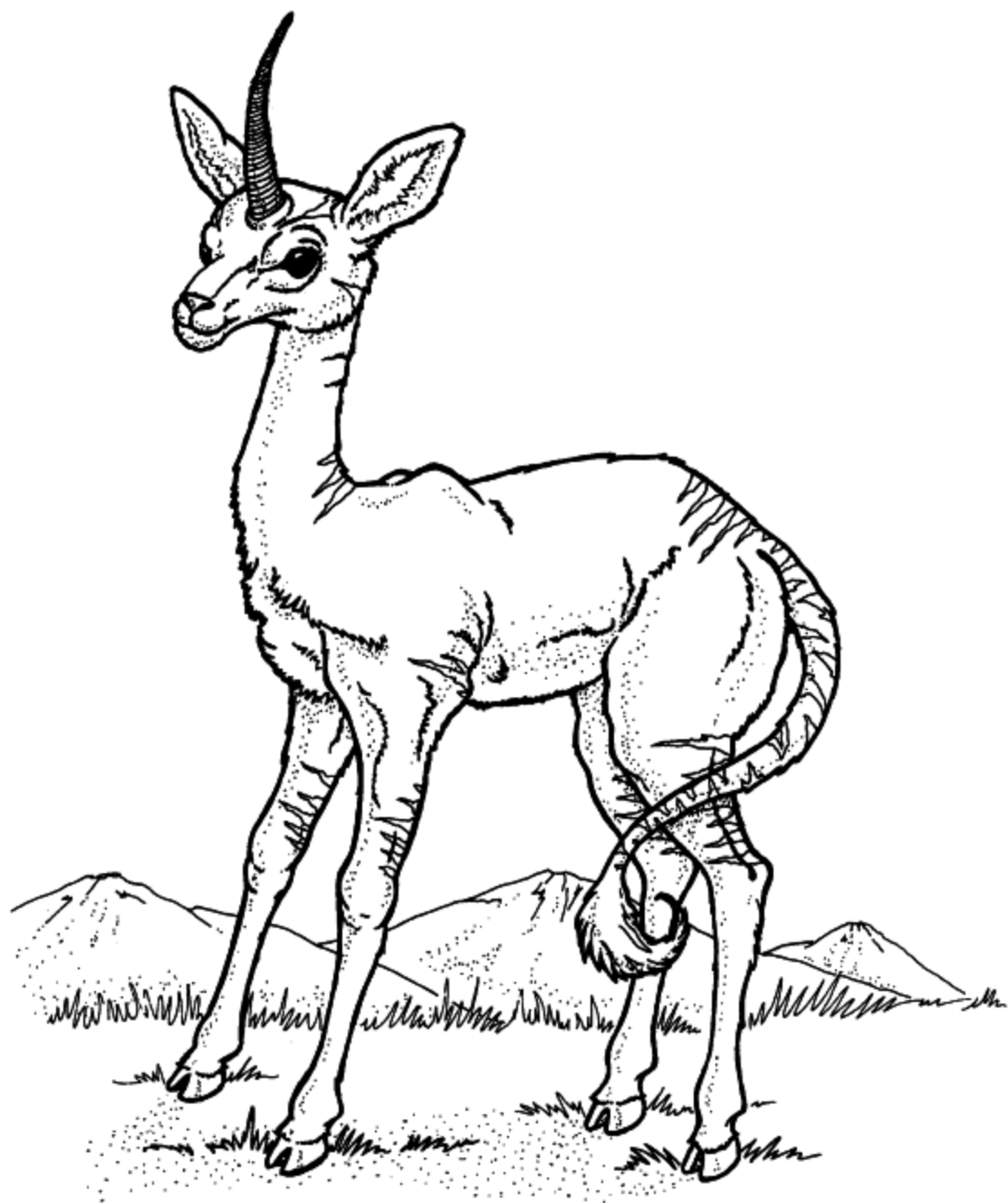
The first "real" unicorn was probably the *Monoclonius*, a herbivorous dinosaur that roamed North America about 120 million years ago. Resembling the rhinoceros, the *Monoclonius* wields a short and stout nasal horn.



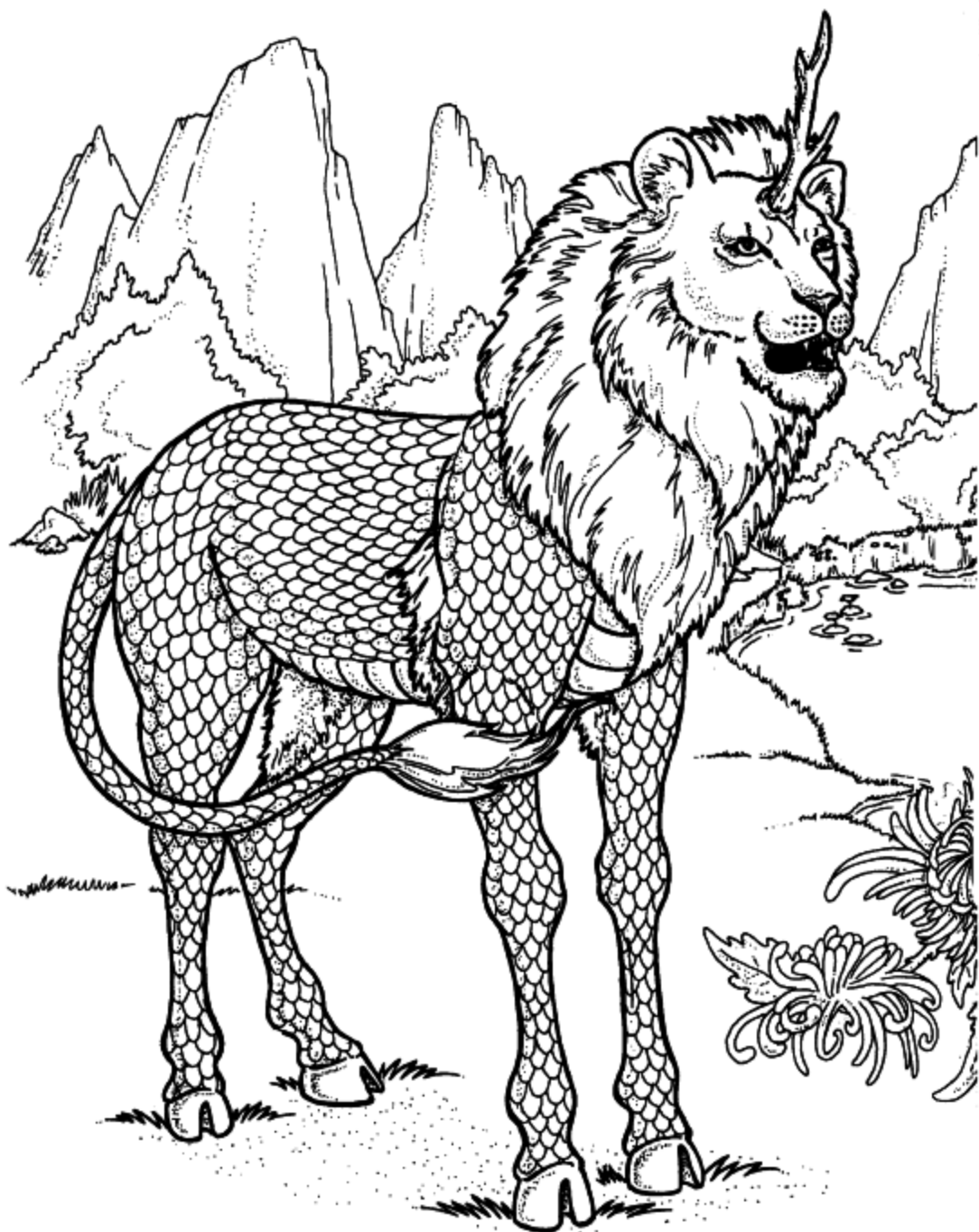
Accounts of battles between unicorns and elephants may have been inspired by another real unicorn, the prehistoric mammal known as *Elasmotherium*, found in Europe, Russia, and Asia in the late Pleistocene period. This enormous beast was roughly the same size as the elephant, with an impressive horn extending up to six and one-half feet long.



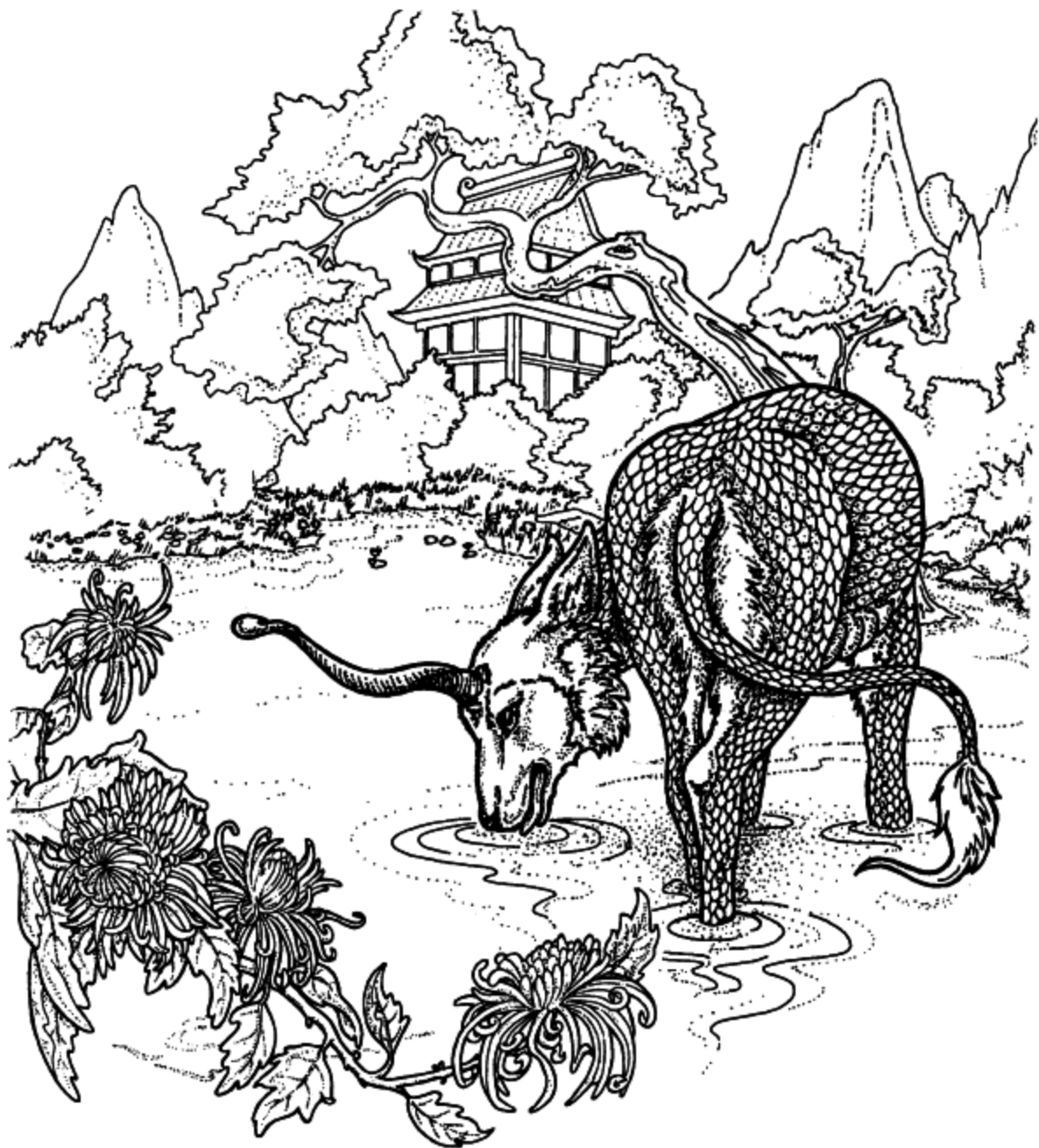
While there are seven references to the unicorn in the Old Testament, there has always been some debate about the accuracy of the translations and the actual identity of the beast. Although that remains in doubt, its fierce, indomitable, and mysterious character is consistent throughout. There is some speculation among scholars that the animals mentioned may have been an extinct species of wild ox known as an auroch, or *Re'em* in Hebrew. Adding to the confusion were Egypt and Mesopotamian sculptures representing the bull in profile with apparently only one horn.



The Orongo was an animal sacred to the Mongols and Tangutans. There were reported to have been whole herds of these antelope, but the singular Orongo or "one horn" was a rare occurrence—about 1 in 2,000. According to legend, its single ringed horn could foretell future events, and its blood had medicinal properties.



Known for its keen sense of justice, Kirin is the name of this ancient Japanese unicorn with a lion's face, deer's body, and dragon scales, who protects the innocent and punishes the guilty.



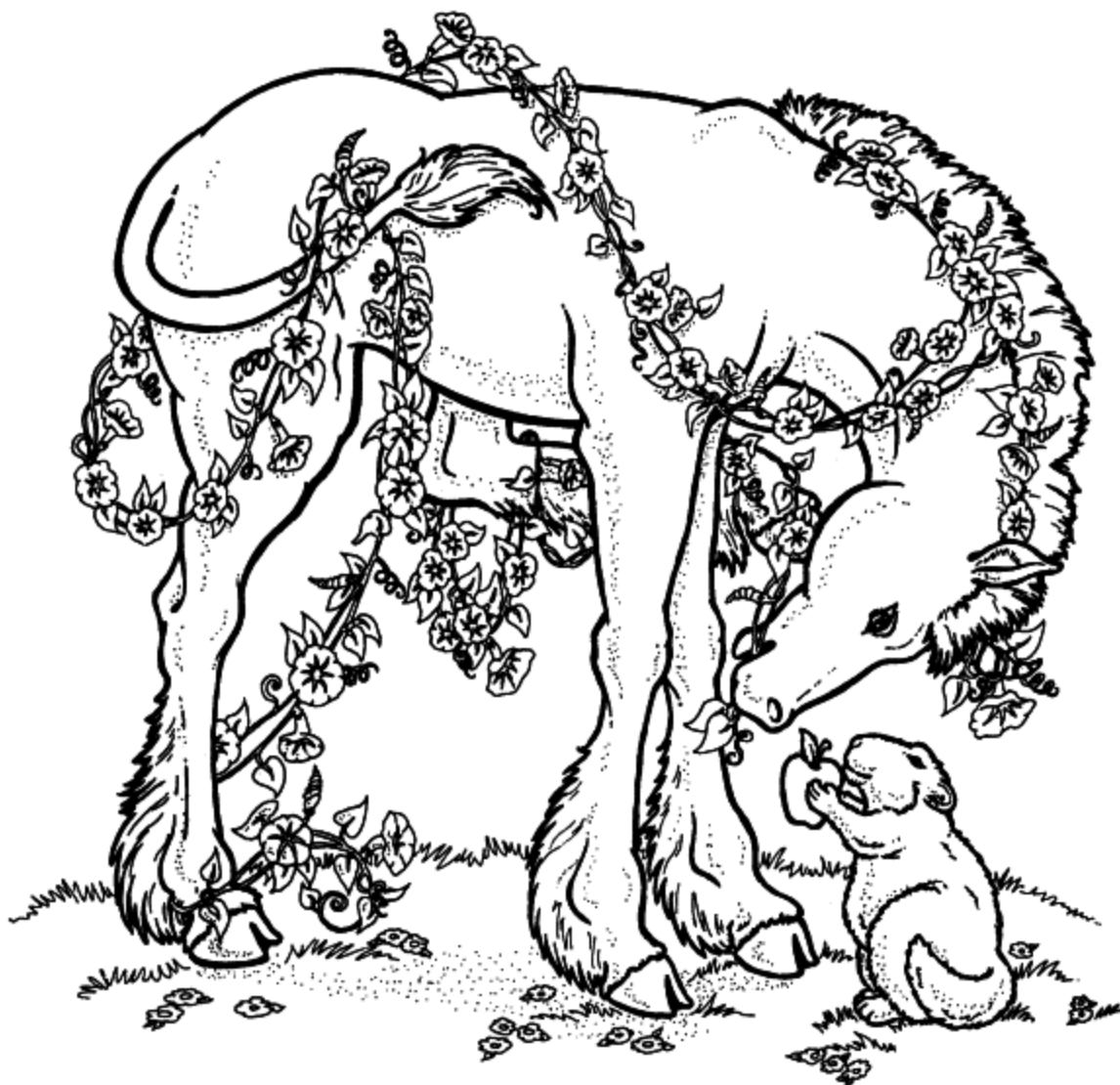
The unicorn known as a ki-lin has had a rich history in Chinese folklore, where stories portray it as a kind, solitary creature found in deep forests and among quiet mountains, eating no living thing, and not even treading on a blade of grass. The sighting of a ki-lin was interpreted as a good omen signifying that a long period of peace was imminent.



A credulous medieval Europe embraced the idea of the unicorn, and codified the qualities that have remained the most familiar to us in modern times. It was at this juncture in its history that the animal became a sacred and wondrous creature: a pure white steed with a flowing mane, an ox tail, and a single spiralling horn, associated with such positive attributes as nobility, strength, purity, innocence, freedom, beauty, and magic.



A conception of the unicorn as a holy creature of God, endowed with the magical abilities to bring life out of death and purify water, gained currency from bestiaries of the Middle Ages. In some legends it was told that the unicorn would make the sign of the cross over poisonous water with its single horn—called the alicorn by some.



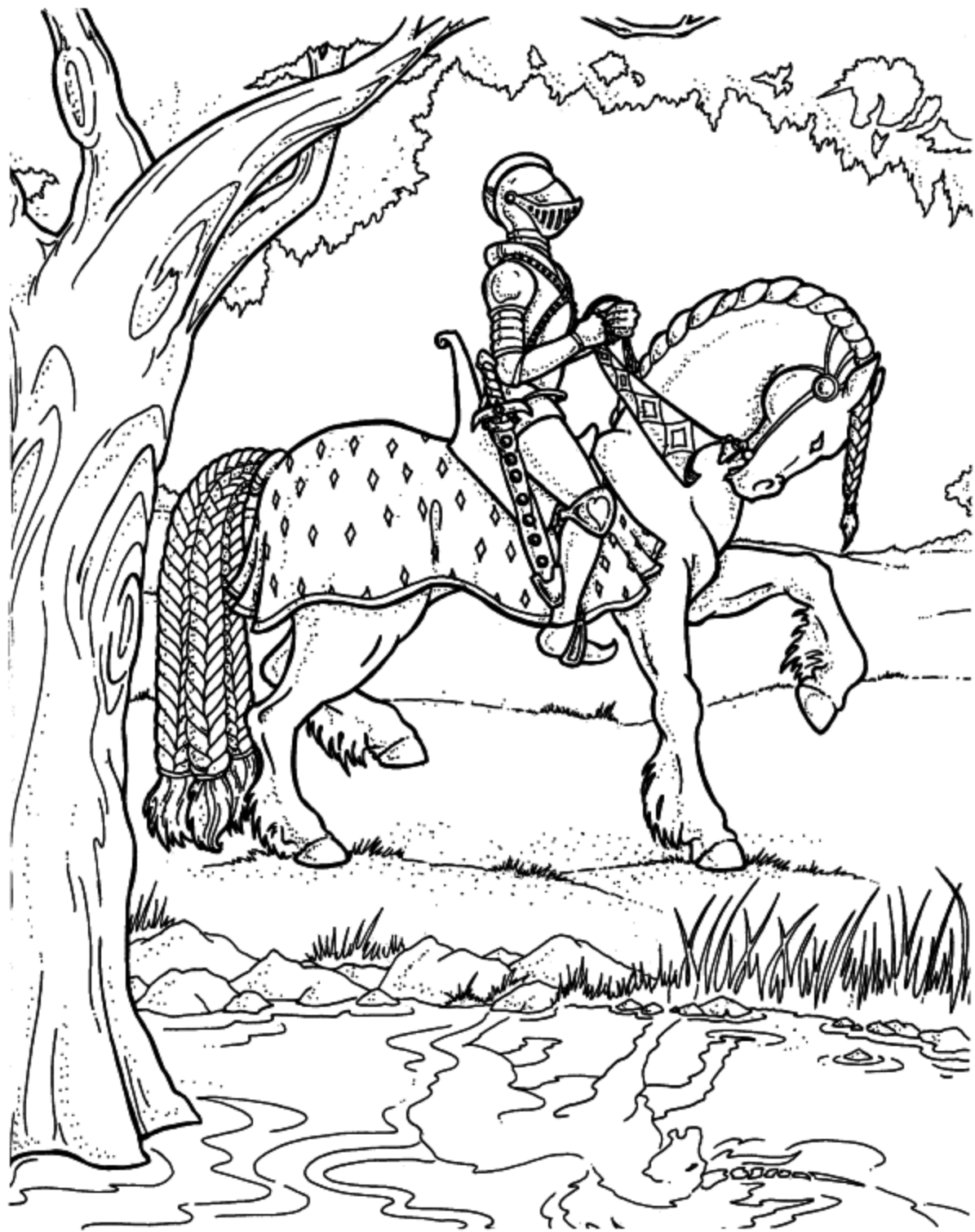
According to some folk tales, the unicorn of the Middle Ages symbolized the season of spring, and was thought to possess the ability to renew life, heal sickness, and guard against evil.



Just as the unicorn was a symbol of spring, the ferocious lion came to symbolize summer. Each and every year the unicorn (spring) and lion (summer) battled for supremacy, and each and every year the gentle unicorn yielded to summer's fury.

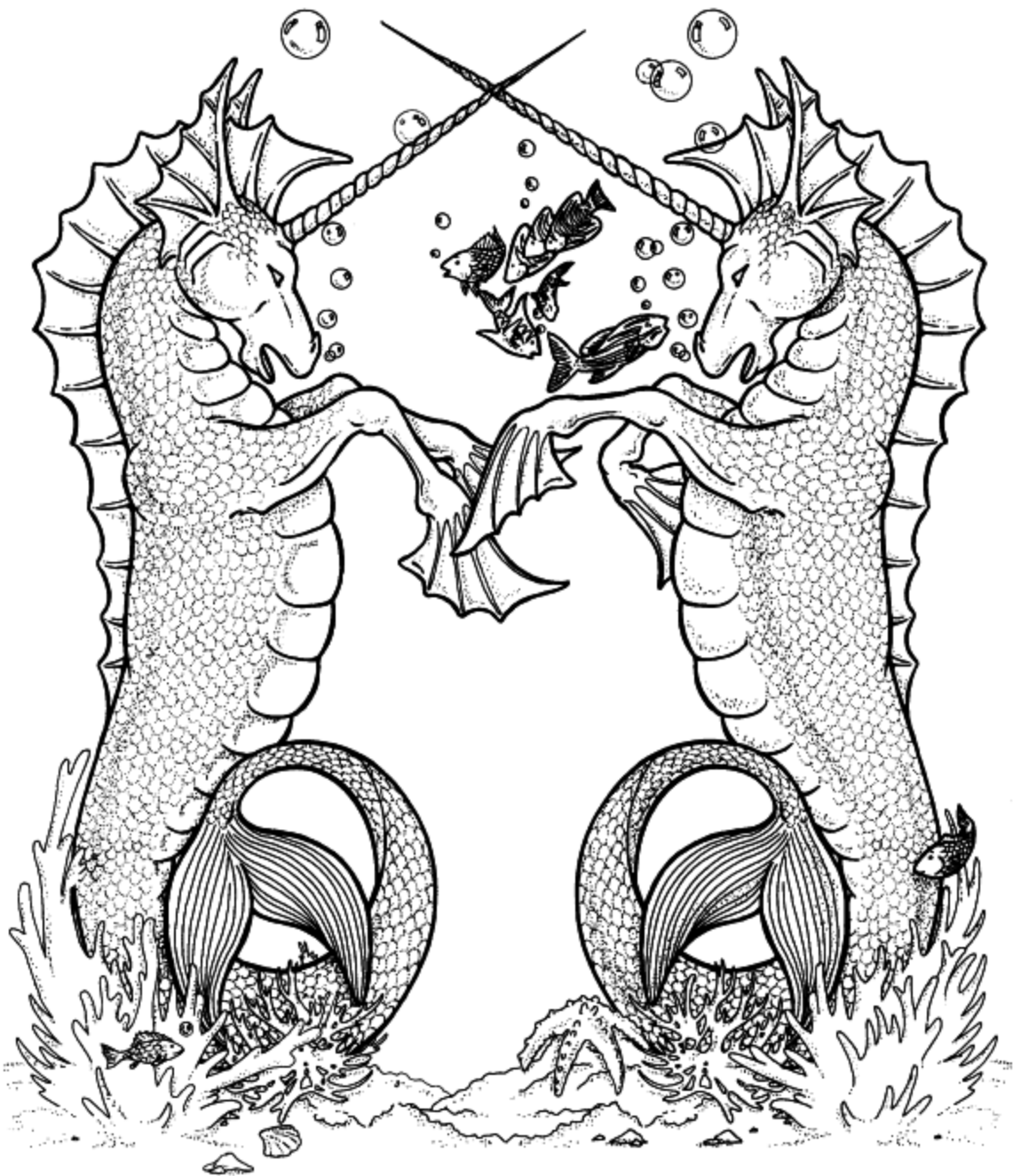


The unicorn horn was highly prized by the rich and powerful because of its ascendancy over poison and evil. It was considered so valuable in fact that some wealthy landowners would mortgage or sell part of their estate to obtain one. Taking advantage of the gullibility of the rich, hunters often produced tusks from the narwhal—an arctic whale with a long spiral tusk, sometimes known as the sea unicorn. This was a far easier task than producing the horn from an elusive and well-hidden unicorn, like the ones pictured above. Can you find the unicorns?

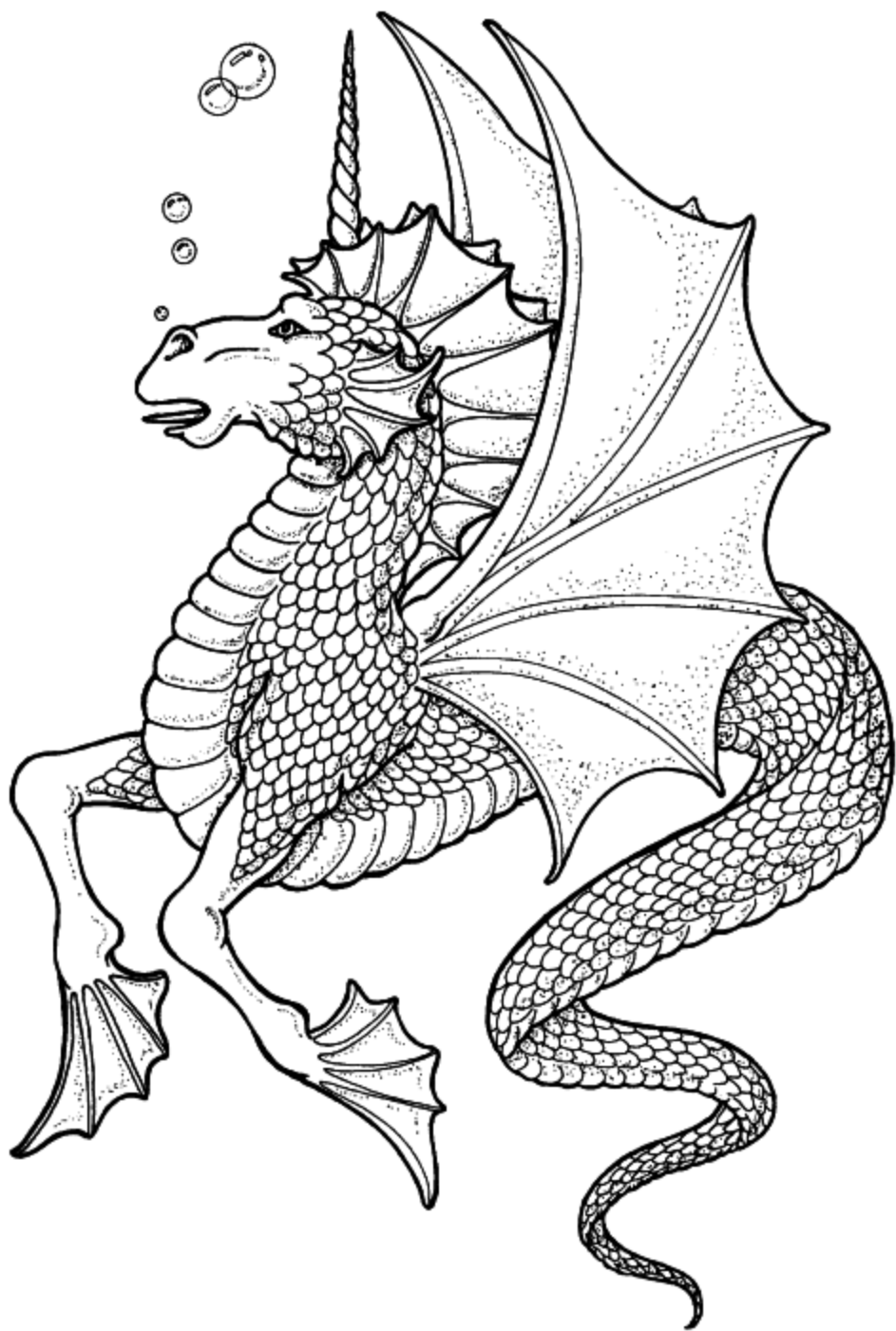




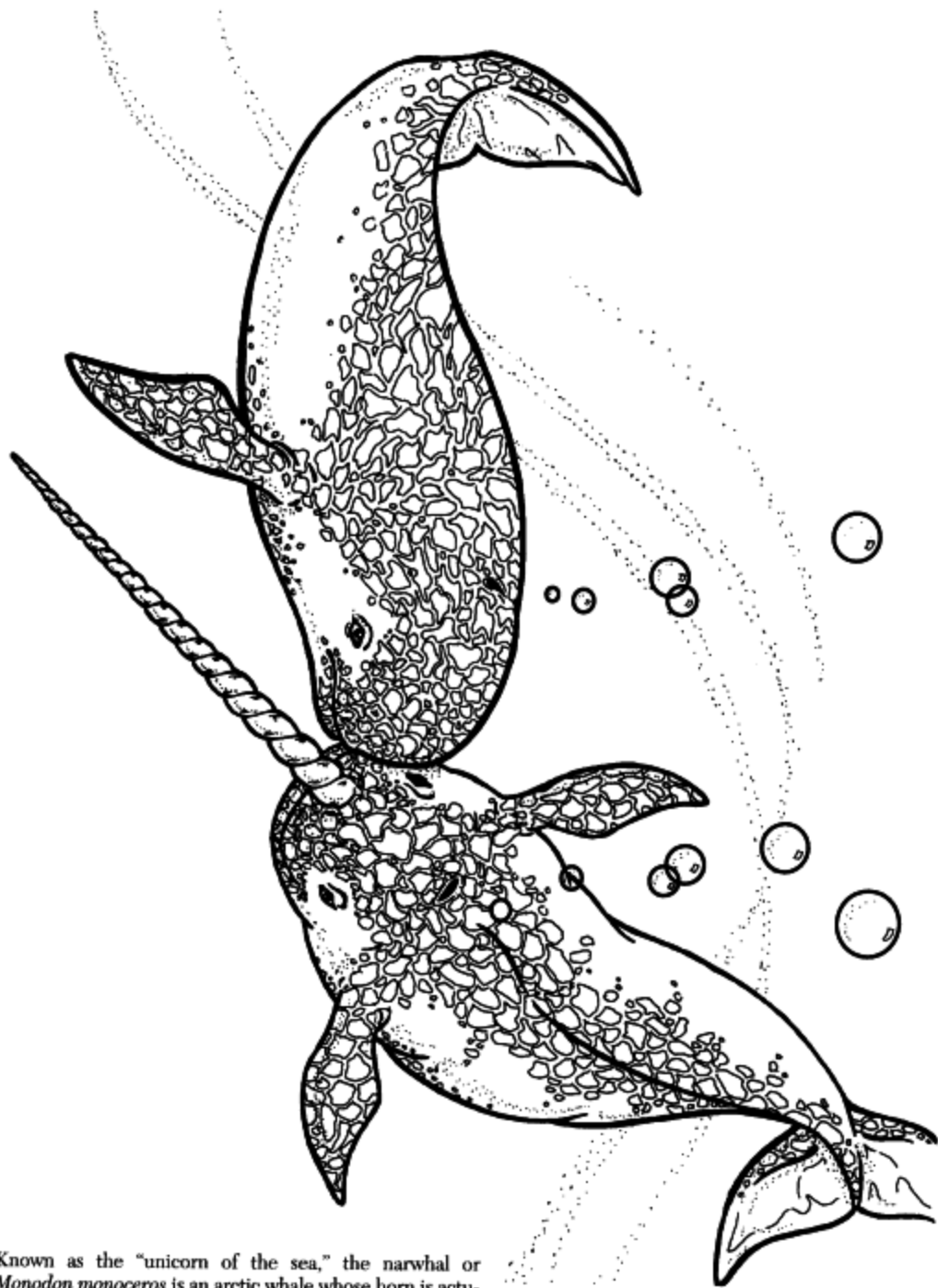
In some countries the legend sprang up that hunters attracted unicorns by using reluctant young virgins as bait. Scenting such a maiden in the forest, the unicorn would seek her out, allow itself to be petted, and fall asleep in her lap. Whereupon the hunters would spring upon the unsuspecting beast and capture it for their king.



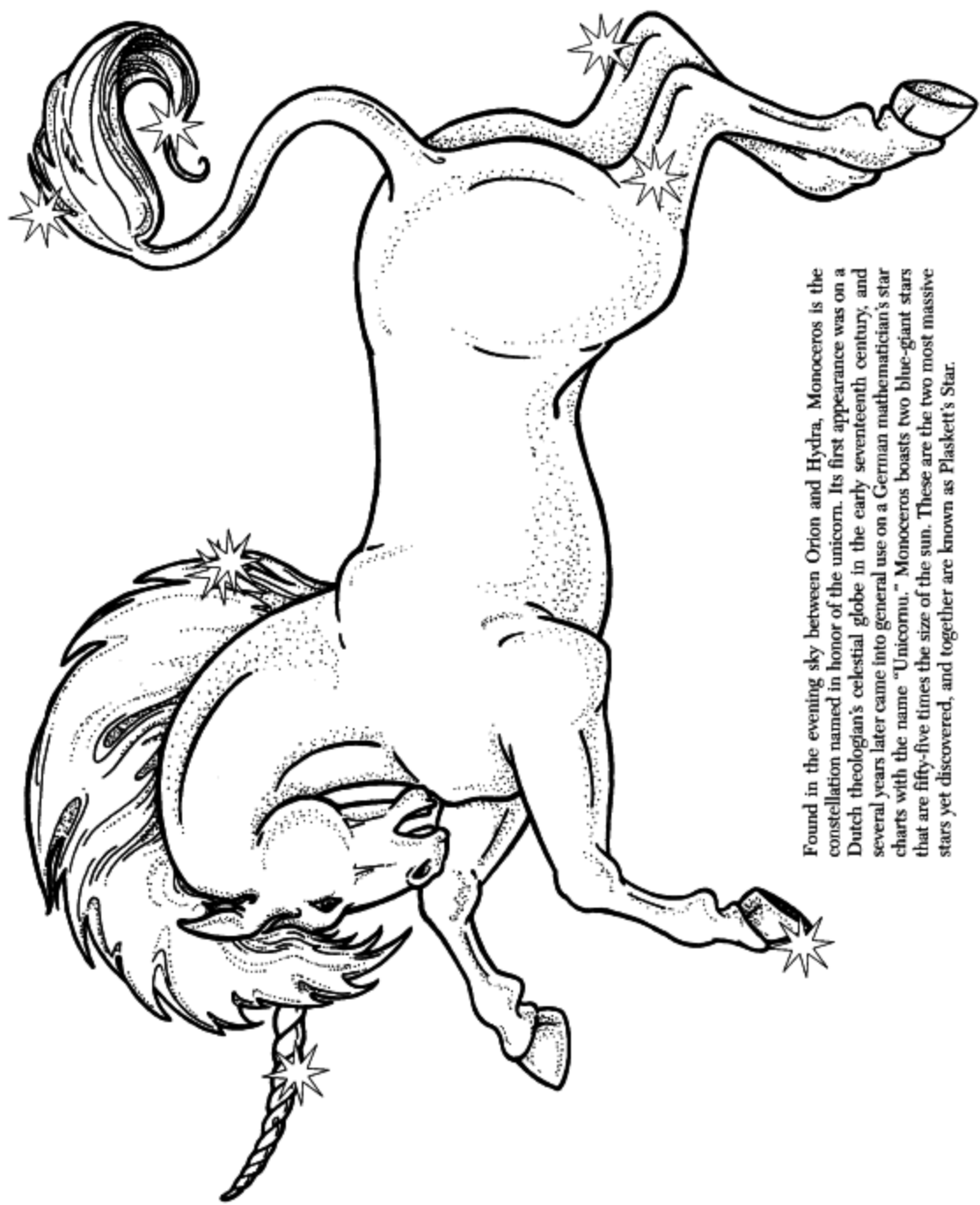
In 1575, André Thevet recorded a description of a unicorn-like sea animal known as a campchurch (in the original French, he referred to it as "Camphur") in his book, *Universal Cosmography* (*La Cosmographie Universelle*). The creature had been found near the straits of Malacca in an area that is now part of Malaysia.



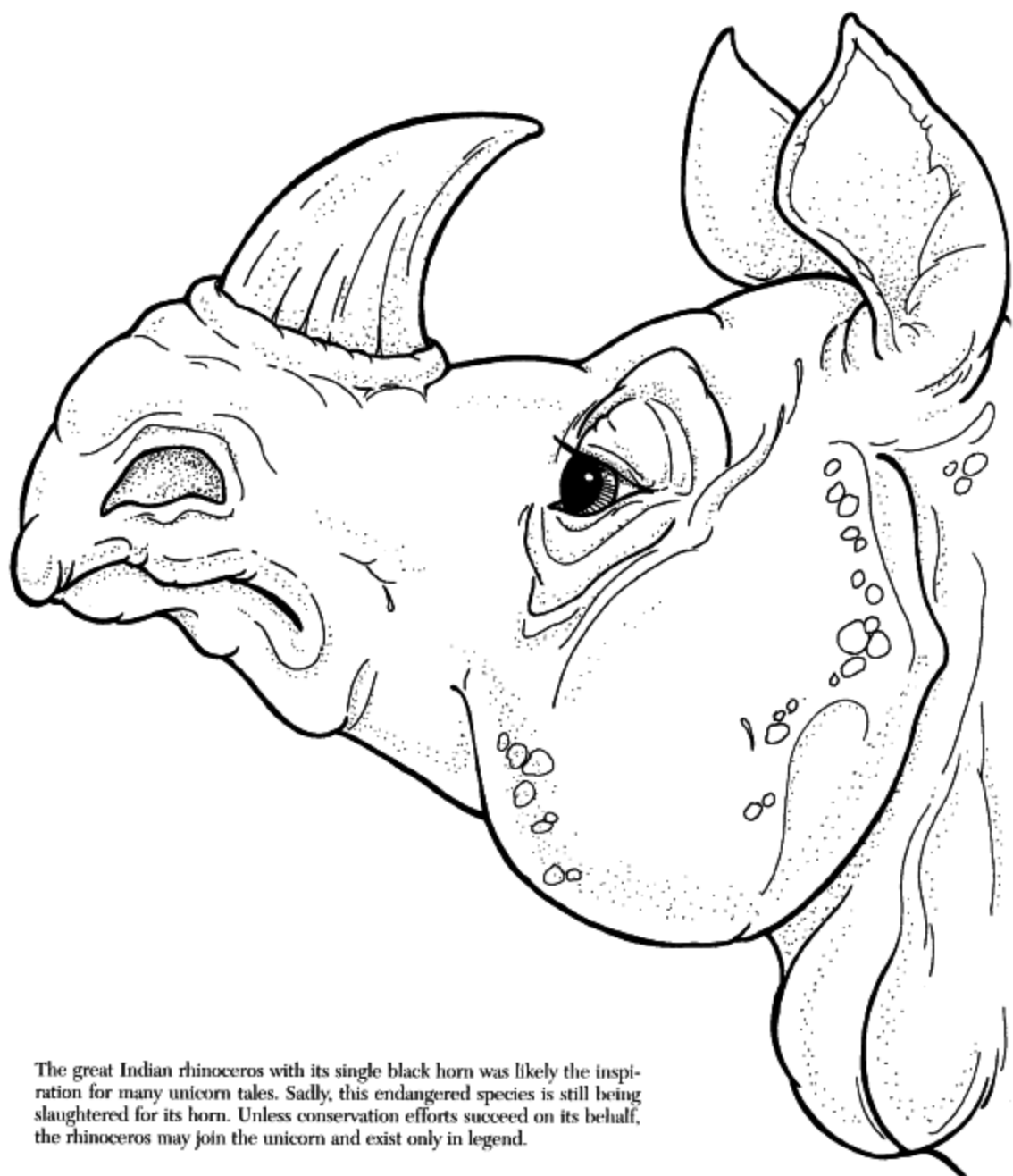
It wasn't until the 15th century in Europe that the unicorn was used as a heraldic symbol, dovetailing with its newfound status as a sacred animal. The Almaricorn—an interesting combination of a winged seahorse and unicorn—appeared on the coat of arms belonging to Knights of the Realm.



Known as the "unicorn of the sea," the narwhal or *Monodon monoceros* is an arctic whale whose horn is actually a very large tooth composed of ivory. The hunting of narwhals for this precious substance has made them an endangered species.



Found in the evening sky between Orion and Hydra, Monoceros is the constellation named in honor of the unicorn. Its first appearance was on a Dutch theologian's celestial globe in the early seventeenth century, and several years later came into general use on a German mathematician's star charts with the name "Unicornu." Monoceros boasts two blue-giant stars that are fifty-five times the size of the sun. These are the two most massive stars yet discovered, and together are known as Plaskett's Star.



The great Indian rhinoceros with its single black horn was likely the inspiration for many unicorn tales. Sadly, this endangered species is still being slaughtered for its horn. Unless conservation efforts succeed on its behalf, the rhinoceros may join the unicorn and exist only in legend.

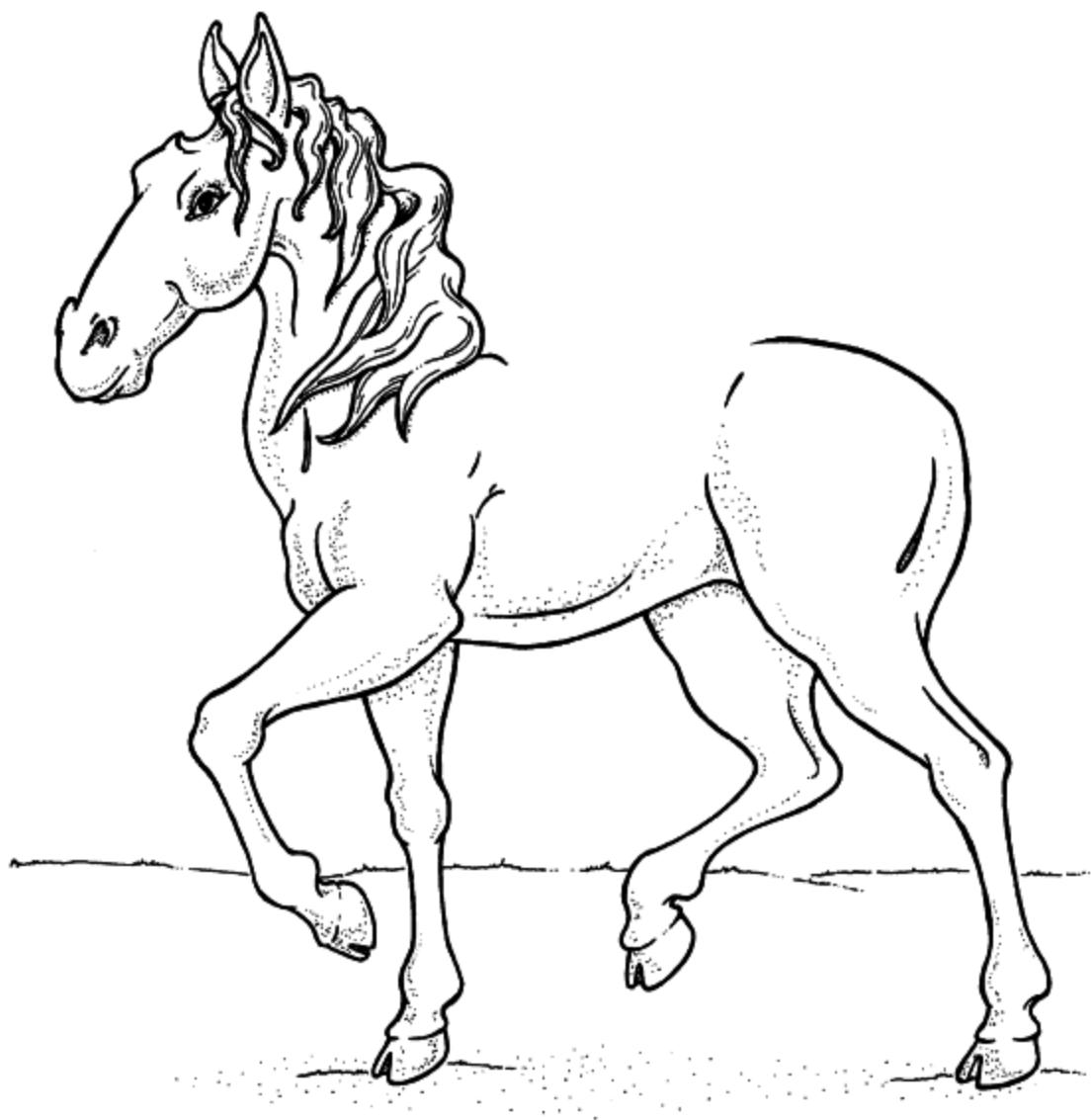


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view, witness, and believe in Unicorns. License does not extend
to hunting or bagging Unicorns.



The unicorns pictured throughout this book are based on a combination of unicorn folklore and legends, historical research, and the author's imagination. Now, go ahead and record above the distinctive qualities of the unicorn of *your* imagination.